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Novelized by Thompson Buchanan From the . Successful Play of the Same Name By WINCHELL SMITH, FREDERIC THOMPSON and PAUL ARMSTRONG

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(Continued.) was "presumptuous, but"-his voice hard after the dreams I've had and in the country. I haven't the right." the plans we've made. I tell you, it's a fearful thing to stand by and see you and Mr. Durant/calmly helping

his sailor to win her." Mrs. Durant smiled appealingly. "Now, now. Edward," she said. You take it too seriously. You know hat George and I have no idea of helping him to win her. If any one is

belping him you are the one." Pinckney looked at her amazed. "I?" he exclutined.

Frances' mother nodded. "Exactly," she said. "You are helping him by your very apparent jealousy. There is nothing that will spur a girl to be particularly nice to one some one she cares for is seeing and

writhing."

voted all his time to circumventing men, and he really knew comparatively little about women.

"But she hasn't seen that I notice it," he protested. "She's been too busy with him to notice anything." The mother laughed out loud at his

"Nonsense, Edward. Mr. Sommers is a nice young man, and I don't blame her for enjoying his visits. Goodness knows, nice young men are not so plentiful in Pittsburg."

Pinckney looked at her reproachfully "I thought you at least were on my side," he complained. "I didn't expect you'd be against me."

He sat down in a big chair and stared gloomily at the fire. Mrs. Durant came over to rest one hand affectionately on his shoulder.

"I am on your side, Edward," she said seriously. "You know that. You know perfectly well that her father and I both hope with all our hearts that some day we shall see you two married."

He turned eagerly and, reaching up, caught her hand.

"Then why don't you speak to he of it?" he exclaimed. "Let her understand your wishes." The woman looked down on him

with a pitying smile. "You poor boy!" she said. "You must be desperate. You want me to propose for you. Well, if George Durant had come to my mother"- She ended with a nod almost savage.

"Perhaps he did for all you know," exclaimed Pinckney.

"No, he didn't. She was dead," snapped Frances' mother. "Now, you poor thing, den't be so tragic. Sommers will go in a day or so, and in a few weeks he may be ordered to the north pole or the equator or goodness out of her way and yours. See her tonight. Talk with her. Let her see how you feel toward her. Now is a good time. She's coming back. I'll leave you."

But it was the butler instead of Frances, as expected, that entered the "Filkins, where is Miss Durant?"

asked Pinckney sharply. The butler turned.

"On the veranda with the navy gentleman, sir," he said. Meanwhile, outside on the veranda,

Frances Durant and Lieutenant Sommers stood side by side in the darkness saying goodby. Back of them,



"She's in love with him. I tell you she's in love with him."

shut off witis the heavy hall doors, was the lighted house. In front, far below, showed the bright windows of the steel works, where the night shift toiled. Now and again, at irregular intervals, the sky was lighted with a sudden glare of the huge chimneys that blazed up and then died abruptly, leaving the night blacker than before. For a time they stood looking out at the distant lights and the silence. At last it was the girl who spoke.

"And tomorrow night you will be down there tolling, watching, waiting, as they forge the gun which is to make your fame," she said softly. "And you?" he asked, just as low.

In the darkness she looked up at him. "And I," she said-"I shall be up here just where I am now, watching the lights and thinking and praying that all will be well."

Again they stood in silence for

Then the man sighed. "I am afraid to come back again," he began unsteadily. "I think I had better say goodby to you tonight." She moved slightly closer.
"Afraid?" It was a taunt tremulous

"Yes," he blurted. "I am afraid, and you know why."

"I'm sorry," he said. "I suppose I on, speaking low, eagerly, yet bitterly. "You know I can't tell you what I broke with real feeling, a feeling of wish to say. I haven't really the right. fear and disappointed ambition that I am a penulless naval officer and you Mrs. Durant mistook for love-"it is the daughter of the biggest steel man

> "What is it you wish to say?" she asked insistently. She was so close their hands touched as he turned toward her. And, touching, the hands lung together.

"You know what I wish to say." he exclaimed. "If I had the right I'd tell you how much I love you. I'd tell you how from the first moment I saw you I wanted you, and you only. 'I'd tell you how I never have lived until I knew you and the rest of my life must be one dreary blank of grinding duty because I must lose you. I'd tell you that life with you would be more happiness than any man/has the right to have. I'd tell you that I'd rather man so much as a knowledge that have one year of you than a million years on earth and all the honors that men could give me. I'd tell you"-he broke off bitterly for a second, then Pinckney opened his eyes. Like broke off bitterly for a second, then many another schemer, he had de repeated—"I'd tell you enough to make you realize what an absolutely dreaming, idiotic fool I am, but I'd tell you enough to make you know how I suffer because I haven't the right to really tell you anything."

In the darkness the girl laughed a low laugh of pure delight. "You are an absolute, idiotic, dream ing fool," she said, so softly, so ten-

derly, that he could not but understand "Frances!" He barely breathed her name. Then all reply was cut off, for she was in his arms with her own arms about his

neck and their lips were tight together. It was nearly half an hour later when Frances Durant, her cheeks flushed, her eyes misty with happiness, opened the big front door and

stepped back into the lighted hall. So much had happened in that short time. She had gone out an anxious, worried girl. She re-entered a glowing woman, loved and loving, sure of herself and happily confident of the future. They were not engaged. No, indeed! They had solemnly assured each other of that fact. It would not do at all for the penniless naval officer to formally ask the hand of the steel king's daughter! But when his gun had been a great success and fame had come to him then he was to come and make his formal plea and ask her father for her hand. And she would be waiting eagerly for her lover, ready with her answer and prepared, no matter what happened, to follow him to the ends of the earth.

Edward Pinckney looked up with a sneer as she entered the library. "Oh, he's gone, has he?" he said contemptuously.

The girl was too happy to mind the "You mean Mr. Sommers?" she said,

gone." "Of course I mean that naval whippersnapper. Who do you suppose I he replied sharply. "You ought to have more sense, Frances,

than to stand out on that cold porch. You're likely to catch pneumonia or anything." The girl smiled slightly. "Oh. I wasn't cold," she said.

"I've been waiting to speak to you," began Pinckney again. "It's about something important."

Frances was in no mood for long, dull conversation. She wanted to get away by herself to think over the last half hour, to feel again the thrill of his touch, to hear again in her imagination the sound of his voice. So she spoke somewhat impatiently.

"Won't tomorrow do, Edward?" He shook his head with decision. "No; tomorrow won't do, Frances. I want to talk to you tonight about something in which I am interested and in which your mother and father are interested also-something which we all wish to bring about."

The girl yawned. She did not have

the least idea what he was going to

"Oh, very well, Edward, if it's anything you wish and mother and father wish, too, just consider that I have agreed and let it go at that. Don't worry me.

To be Continued.)

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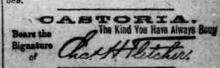
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